Home Rule League Demand - - -

COMMONWEAL OFFICE
Adyar, Madras

The Home Rule League Demand

Being the Address and Memoranda presented by the Home Rule League to H. E. the Viceroy and the Secretary of State

THE COMMONWEAL OFFICE
ADYAR, MADRAS
1917

To

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY

AND

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA

AND

To

The Right Hon. H. I. Majesty's Secretary of State for India

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY

SIR—We, the Home Rule League for India, with over 52,000 members, represented here by its Central and Provincial Officers, approach Your Excellency, and welcome you, Sir, to our shores, certain of a sympathetic hearing of our plea that Self-Government within the Empire—or, more shortly, Home Rule, control over our domestic affairs—should be granted to India by His Imperial Majesty and the British Parliament. We accept the Congress-League scheme as a substantial advance towards our goal, and endorse the demand of the National Congress and the Muslim League that, in the Reconstruction of the Empire after the War, India shall be placed on an equality with the Self-Governing Dominions, as a free and Self-Governing Nation in the British Commonwealth.

We look to His Imperial Majesty's Government to carry out the pledge of the Premier, that

The leading principle is that the wishes of the inhabitants must be the supreme consideration in the

re-settlement. In other words, the formula adopted by the Allies with regard to the disputed territories in Europe is to be applied equally in the tropical countries.

While these words were not spoken of internal Government, the principle is of universal application, and we feel sure that Great Britain will not deny to the Indian People the right which, with her Allies, she enforces everywhere else, and that she will not maintain in India a bureaucratic and irresponsible Government, which, with the help of Indian soldiers and Indian money, she and her Allies are fighting to destroy everywhere else in the world. We believe that the British Government will meet our claims with sympathy, and that the Government of India, as they have already shown, are in full accord with British feeling. We, therefore, ask for Self-Government, for a Government responsible to the elected representatives of the Indian Nation, both in the Provincial Councils and in the Supreme Council—the National Parliament. But as a first step we are willing to accept a transitional stage to this goal, and this is embodied in the Congress-League scheme, described in the Memorandum we present with this address. This scheme provides for an irremovable Executive Council, consisting of equal numbers of nominated and elected members, the latter being Indians; for a Legislative Council of four-fifths elected members and one-fifth nominated: control over the purse is given to the Legislative Council, so that where opposition arises between the Legislature and the Executive, both sides may learn in the struggle to give and take, while the final argument, refusal of supplies, lies with the elected majority, except with regard to military charges for the defence of the country. The clauses in the scheme conferring the power of veto on the

Executive provide an adequate check on hasty action by the legislature. When the Reconstruction of the Empire is considered the Congress-League demands that India shall be raised to equality with the Self-Governing Dominions, *i.e.*, and have Governments responsible to the Legislative Councils.

We do not propose to substitute an Indian oligarchy for the English bureaucracy now existing. We aim at responsible Government and an ever-widening electorate; we separate the administrative from the legislative side of Government, and exclude the Civil Service from the Executive Councils, save in exceptional cases. We object to the system more than to its agents.

We respectfully submit that none of the objections raised to this scheme are valid. The lack of education of the masses is not greater than that of the British masses at the time of the Reform Bill of 1832, and is not likely to be much improved until India enjoys Home Rule. Education in England was not taken seriously in hand till after the second Great Reform Bill of 1867. The electorates cannot be made wholly satisfactory at first; Great Britain is still disputing, 85 years after the Great Reform Bill, over the distribution of electoral power. It is absurd to expect in India a perfection of political system not yet attained in any western country. India will go on improving her political system when the power to do so is in her own hands. She must beat her music out for herself by degrees, as other countries are doing, and she must have the power to do this as other countries have. She does not want an English system imposed on her complete by Englishmen; she wants an Indian system gradually worked out by herself, and only asks from Great Britain to be set free, as are the

Self-Governing Dominions, to work out her own salvation, under the British Crown.

The microscopic minority of Englishmen, residing in this country temporarily as members of the Civil Service, or of the Government, or for commercial or religious purposes, are now resenting the very slight control of "an ill-informed House of Commons elected by a still more ignorant electorate," to quote the Calcutta *Statesman.* They claim that the interests of 255,000,000 Indians shall be left in the hands of 122,919 Englishmen, alien in religion, in customs, in habits, in ways of thinking, from the people of the country. Anywhere outside India such a claim would be regarded as absurd and intolerable. The lack of education, the appalling poverty and increasing indebtedness of the agricultural population, 218·3 millions by the Census of 1911, resulting in the short life-period of 23·5 years—in England it is 40, in New Zealand 60—the high death-rate and small resisting power to disease due to lack of vitality, *i.e.*, to mal-nutrition, the decay of indigenous industries, the heavy taxation relative to income—all these shew that the "ruling oligarchy" are not particularly efficient in their rule. The inefficiency exposed by the Mesopotamian Commission in military matters would be shewn in civil matters if an impartial Commission were appointed to investigate them.

We submit, with this address, a Memorandum, containing our endorsement of the Congress-League scheme, together with facts and figures which show the necessity for its acceptance. To this we add proposals for Local Government bodies—Village Boards (Panchayats), Taluq and District Boards—with figures from the Madras Presidency as a sample, working on a system similar to that obtaining in England under the

Local Government Board Act of 1871, and the subsequent cognate enactments. We consider this scheme as vital to Home Rule, as it brings the immediate concerns of the people under popular control; it adds Village Boards to the present existing bodies, and makes them the unit of Local Government instead of the Firka, or Revenue Circle; it also substitutes election for nomination in all cases, and renders the members responsible to their electors. We believe that these changes will render the system really useful and educative.

To these proposals we append certain illustrative and well-considered documents; a proposed "Commonwealth of India Act," working out the Congress-League scheme in detail with a "Supplementary Judicature Act"; a "Panchayats Act," establishing Village Panchayats; "a Compulsory Elementary Education Act"; "Self-Government for India"; and "District Work"; these last two are by the President of the Home Rule League, and comprise a description of the whole series of elected bodies, intended as suggestive only, and not endorsed in every detail, the education test being probably impracticable though desirable. We add also the scheme of the Madras Congress Committee, the final scheme adopted by the Congress and Muslim League, and the Memorandum of the Nineteen.

We further desire to submit that the argument that democracy is foreign to India cannot be alleged by any well-informed person. Maine and other historians recognise the fact that Democratic Institutions are essentially Aryan, and spread from India to Europe with the immigration of Aryan peoples; Panchayats, the "Village Republics," had been the most stable institution of India, and only vanished during

the last century under the pressure of the East India Company's domination. They still exist within the castes, each caste forming within itself a thorough democracy, in which the same man may have as relations a prince and a peasant. Social rank does not depend so much on wealth and titles, as on learning and occupation. India is democratic in spirit, and in institutions left to her from the past and under her control in the present.

The variety of religions in India does not constitute a political difficulty which should be allowed to stand in the way of the reforms we demand. If this objection were to be allowed to prevail, the path of reform may remain blocked for ever. The quarrels between Hindus and Musalmans are less frequent than they were, and do not touch the political amity now existing between the two great communities. There has been of late years increasing evidence of joint action by Hindus and Musalmans in the promotion of common causes, and it is a very pertinent fact that the reforms we urge are put forward equally by the National Congress and the All-India Muslim League after joint deliberation.

The fear that English vested interests will be endangered by Home Rule is chimerical. Britain has larger investments in countries other than India, but does not, therefore, claim political dominance. The unfair advantages over Indians now possessed by English traders, doctors, and educationists will, of course, disappear, but the deprivation of unfair privileges should not be an obstacle to the establishment of justice.

We consider that these various pleas are not reasons for withholding Home Rule, but are merely colourable excuses for withholding justice.

We place our demand for Home Rule, however, more on the ground of principle than on that of expediency. We resent what Mr. Gokhale called "the atmosphere of inferiority" in which the Indian lives; what Mr. Bhupendranath Basu described as "a bureaucratic administration. . . atrophying the nerves of action and, what is most serious, necessarily dwarfing in us all feeling of self-respect". We feel what Mr. Asquith lately called "the intolerable degradation of a foreign yoke," and we believe that Great Britain will co-operate with us in the building up of our freedom. Her past struggles for liberty are the guarantee of her present sympathy.

We, therefore, look with confidence to Your Excellency and to you, Sir, to help us in this magnificent task, and for the sake of the Empire no less than of India to remove the dependence which cripples her, and to aid us in becoming free and strong.

We remain
Your obedient servants

Hon. President:
S. SUBRAMANIA IYER, K.C.I.E., LL.D., Late Acting Chief Justice, High Court, Madras.

President:
ANNIE BESANT, Editor, Fellow of the Benares Hindu University, Madras.

General Secretaries:
C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR, High Court Vakil, Fellow of the Madras University, Madras.
JAMNADAS DWARKADAS, Merchant, Bombay.

Organising Secretary:
HON. MR. K. V. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR, Supreme Legislative Council, Srirangam.

Treasurer:
B. P. WADIA, Journalist, Madras.

For the Home Rule League for India.

Memorandum to accompany the Address submitted by the Home Rule League to His Excellency Lord Chelmsford, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.M.G., Viceroy and Governor-General of India and the Rt. Honourable Mr. Edwin Samuel Montagu, P.C., M.P., the Secretary of State for India.

As will appear from our Address to which this Memorandum is an annexure, the Home Rule League accepts the scheme put forward by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League as a substantial advance towards the goal. The League has been organised for the purpose of securing Home Rule for India through all law-abiding and constitutional activity and one of the principal objects of its organisation is to strive to maintain the connection of India with Great Britain by becoming a free Nation within the British Empire under the Imperial Crown of His Majesty the King-Emperor. The League endeavours to carry on a continuous propaganda with reference to the necessity and expediency of the grant of Self-Government to this country and its aim is to support and strengthen the Indian National Congress which has laboured for thirty years to lay the foundations of Indian Self-Government. The League was started on the 1st September, 1916, in order to provide a programme of continuous work, educative and propagandist, such as was contemplated by the resolution of the Indian National Congress at Bombay in the year 1915 which definitely laid down that in its opinion the time had arrived for the introduction of further and substantial measures of reform for the attainment of Self-Government similar to that enjoyed by the Self-Governing Nations of the British Empire.

We, on behalf of the members of the League residing in all parts of this land and numbering over 52,000, cordially respond to the invitation of His Excellency the Viceroy to examine the problems which confront us from the standpoint of what is practicable, what is judicious and, above all, what is right. With regard to what is judicious and what is practicable, the matter is largely in the hands of the British Government and the Government of India have also reserved to themselves the right to judge the time and the measure of each advance. But we propose in this memorandum to put forward for the consideration of His Majesty's Government and of the Government of India our view of what is right in the hope that what is right will, after all, be found to be what is most expedient.

We feel that the scheme formulated by the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League and the now well-known Memorandum of the Nineteen Members of the Imperial Legislative Council of which the former scheme is an elaboration, are divisible into two parts, *viz.*, the enunciation of the rights which must be secured to the people consistently with their just aspirations, and secondly, the changes in the mechanism of the Government necessary to the adequate enjoyment of those rights. It has been pointed out, and we feel, that so long as the governmental machinery and the Permanent Civil Service are synonymous, the spirit of the administration will not expand in response to growing needs. It is the general feeling of all who have bestowed any thought on the subject that the system of bureaucratic government is out-worn and is indefencible from the point of view either of efficiency or of the lasting progress of the country. It is with this view that the India Council is sought to be

abolished; and we do not apologise for quoting as a reason for the abolition what the Right Hon. Mr. Montagu has himself said on this subject: "The whole system of the India Office is designed to prevent control by the House of Commons for fear that there might be too advanced a Secretary of State." The object we have in view is also sought to be attained by the insistence on the English members of the Executive Councils being drawn from amongst men trained in the public life of England and not ranked in the Civil Service. In other words, we desire that as in all other civilised countries, the permanent officials of the land must not have the dominant voice in the policy of the government. We also insist that the Secretaries to the various Governments who are nearly always members of the Civil Service should not have the large and ill-defined powers now vested in them. We feel that unless and until these ostensibly minor reforms are introduced, all major reforms will prove ineffective. And in this connection we may give the assurance that though we desire the progressive Indianisation of the Government in all its departments, it is not the object of the Congress-League scheme merely to exchange European for Indian Agency as it is universally felt that vested interests and the spirits of departmentalism and centralisation will work as great a mischief in Indian as in European hands. We also feel that any bureaucracy will determinedly fight against all encouragement of new ideas, and the object of the scheme is to attempt the eradication of the root-evil. The complaint, in the language of Sir William Wedderburn, is not as against the men but "against the system which has placed them in a false position making them masters where they should be servants". We

agree with that far-sighted statesman that the Permanent Civil Service is for no fault of its own a privileged foreign body with professional interests adverse to Indian aspirations; and his language cannot be bettered when he says that "the Civil Service dominates the administration and intervenes as a non-conducting medium between the good-will of the British democracy and the claims of the Indian people".

Under the existing system of administration even after the introduction of the Minto-Morley reforms what is the state of affairs? There are, no doubt, a larger number of representatives in the Imperial Legislative Council as well as in the various Provincial Legislative Councils of the country; the right has been given of moving resolutions in the Council and of discussing the Budget; the right of interpellation has been enlarged; an Indian member has been appointed to the Imperial Executive Council as well as in each of the major Provincial Governments; and there are some Indians in the Council of the Secretary of State. But these rights are not sufficient to give the Indians any real or determining voice in the administration of their country. In the Provincial Legislative Councils there are finance committees of officials and non-officials, but these are only consulted with reference to certain items of expenditure in the Budget and the Committees have absolutely no voice in shaping the financial policy of the Government. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that representative bodies like the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League have demanded real Self-Government and not a mere *simulacrum*.

We propose, in this memorandum, to discuss what is implied by Self-Government such as we demand and what are the arguments in favour of

its immediate grant and what objections have been urged and how such objections may be met. What is the work that a self-governing nation does or is expected to do, or to put it otherwise, what is meant by Self-Government? The principal duties or functions of the Government are: (1) to defend the country from foreign invasion, (2) to maintain peace within its own dominions, (3) to raise revenue by means of taxation and to spend this revenue in the best and most economical manner, (4) to make and to enforce just laws, (5) to administer even-handed justice, (6) to make arrangements for the development of education and sanitation and kindred National services and (7) to develop communications and give facilities for the expansion of agriculture, industries and commerce.

In analysing these duties and obligations, we do not forget that the objects and purposes of all progressive political parties in India and of the Home Rule League is avowedly to maintain the British connection and to recognise the paramountcy of the British power. We feel proud to be component parts of the most freedom-loving Empire in the world and we know we shall not be mistaken when we assert that our interests and those of the Empire alike demand the continuance of a close and organic union between India and the rest of the Imperial fabric. We do not, therefore, propose, in this memorandum, to discuss with any fullness the problem of defence and the maintenance of peace. But we do not shut our eyes to the blessings of the Pax Britanica when we emphasise that to some of the duties of a Government indicated above, the British administration has not set its hands. For instance, the Government have not helped in the building up of an Indian mercantile marine. On the

contrary within historical memory the Indian shipping and ship-building industries have declined and nearly disappeared. No aerial service has been generated. The Indian army is not manned in all its divisions by Indians and the Commissioned officers are all non-Indians, though a few weeks ago a notable pronouncement has been made partially rectifying this old mistake. We feel sure we are not using the language of exaggeration when we assert that the present War would have been impossible if a policy of trust had dictated the expedient of arming and training in military duties the people of this country. We do not propose to labour the point as to the capacity of Indians to perform such work as they have been given opportunities to do. In the pre-British period, Hindus and Musalmans did the whole work of administration themselves and it must be remembered that the art of Government had made great progress in the country even before the British came. The argument is often advanced that if Indians proved their worth they would have been given the necessary opportunities to rise to the highest positions in the State; but we ask, and have always asked, how fitness for any particular kind of work could be tested unless opportunities are actually given for doing them. It is for this reason that insistence has always been laid on the necessity to appoint Indians to high offices in the State. Men like Romesh Chandra Dutt, Dewan Bahadur S. Srinivasaraghava Aiyangar and Sir Krishna Gupta could not get a Chief Commissionership or a Lieutenant-Governorship though it could not be said that they are inferior in ability to the general run of British officials, and surely Sir Madhava Row and Sir Seshadri Iyer could have been trusted to rule any Province with success and distinction.

In a booklet published by the Editor of the *Modern Review*, entitled "Towards Home Rule," the following observations are quoted from the *Philippine Review* for May, 1916, which are very pertinent to this discussion. "Dependent peoples are always looked upon by their masters as short of qualifications and whatever their actual merits may be they are lost sight of under colour of the prevailing belief that the people are without such qualifications. Their failures are magnified, their successes minimised; their failures are theirs and the successes not theirs, the latter being necessarily the work of their masters." We feel that the successful management of the affairs of the country is not such a mysterious or complicated matter as to be beyond the competence of the present-day Indians. We emphasise with the historian Lecky that "the art of management, whether applied to public business or to assemblies, lies strictly within the limits of education and what is required is much less transcendental abilities than practice, tact, courage, good-temper, courtesy and industry". We certainly claim that this country which has produced some of the world's great statesmen and thinkers is not unfit for Self-Government; not more unfit, certainly, than the natives of the Philippine Islands. These Islands were ceded by Spain to the United States in 1899 and in 1916 they have been provided with an autonomous form of Government. Both branches of the legislative body, the Philippine Senate and the Philippine House of Representatives, are elected. The Secretaries of Executive Departments are appointed by the Governor-General with the consent of the Senate; and in the year 1917 we understand all the Secretaries are Philippinos, with the exception of the Secretary

of the Department of Public Instruction, who is an American. In the government of the Provinces, the Governor, who is the chief Executive official and the Head of the Provincial Board, is elected by the popular vote. The government of the towns is stated, in the *Statesman's Year Book for* 1917, to be practically autonomous, the officials being elected by the qualified voters of the Municipality. We feel that the opportunity which has been given to a country like the Philippine Islands ought certainly to be extended to us.

One of the objections urged against the Congress-League scheme is the assertion often made and recently reiterated by the Lord Bishop of Bombay, that the genius of the Indian people is against democracy. The answer would be found in Professor Rhys Davids' *Buddhist India* and in Vincent A. Smith's *Early History of India*, which contain the results of the investigations by competent scholars which have demonstrated that in the ancient Indian monarchies there were various checks upon the powers of Kings. The election of Kings was a well-known Indian phenomenon and in the Madras Presidency in particular epigraphic inscriptions prove that there were assemblies which tempered the autocracy of Kings. The local affairs were administered by well-organised local committees or Panchayats, exercising administrative and judicial powers under Royal sanction. The Association of Popular Committees with governmental functions was well known to India long anterior to the introduction of the democratic system in Europe. Another statement has been made that India was conquered because of the loss of our capacity for self-rule. Without pausing to consider whether India was conquered at all in the real sense, we would venture to refer to the case of the French

Canadians who were conquered by the English in 1763, but to whose Colony Self-Government was freely and ungrudgingly granted within thirty years thereafter. The case of the Boers, who were conquered and granted Self-Government immediately afterwards, is also in point. The Maoris were granted the right to return members to the New Zealand Parliament almost immediately after their conquest. We have already adverted to the case of the Philippine Islands who, half civilised as they were, have had Home Rule such as we ask for, for the last decade or so, and have been promised complete autonomy and have been granted a large portion of it by the legislation of August, 1916. It is unnecessary to meet more fully the argument that conquest does not and need not involve loss of self-rule.

It has been further alleged that Indians themselves prefer the arbitrament by European Judge or Magistrate in their own quarrels and recently this fact has been adverted to more than once by the opponents of Self-Government for India. Assuming for a moment the truth of this contention, we charge that this argument is not valid. In the language of a well-known writer, G. Bernard Shaw: "In the middle ages when the Italian States had a dispute, they asked a stranger to settle it because the stranger as such was impartial, and when an Indian has a dispute with another Indian he may be just as shrewd in his preference for the English Magistrate as the mediæval Italian, knowing that indifference even when it is contemptuous is not a bad working substitute for impartiality . . . . But the days are past when Judges were also law-givers and rulers. Nations may have as many foreign Judges as they like for the sake of the foreigners' impartiality, but they must govern

themselves." It is next suggested that Home Rule is unsuitable for this country on account of the existence of many languages, races and castes. What about Russia with its various religious differences and the United States themselves? The difficulty of language in this country has also been largely exaggerated. Though the dialects spoken in India amount to over 200, yet there are only a dozen principal languages, each of which covers a very large area. In the United Provinces, Behar, Orissa, Bengal, the Maharashtra, the Andhra and Canarese and Malayalam Districts, the Tamil Districts and others, the people of the provinces or tracts practically all understand one main language. And as for sects and creeds, they are not really more intolerant of each other than the Christian sects inhabiting any western country. Above all, the example of the Native States is valuable as illustrating the possibility of introducing representative institutions and the efficiency of Home Rule. At page 4 of the address of the Dewan of Mysore to the Representative Assembly, dated 26th October, 1917, it will be found that orders have been passed already in that State for re-organising the system of local Self-Government in Mysore in the direction of rendering the people really responsible agents in the administration of their local affairs. It will be found that the Village Improvement Scheme in Mysore since its introduction has made steady progress and village committees are working in 15,127 villages and only 1162 remain to be brought under the scheme. If Indian States such as Mysore, Baroda, Gwalior and Travancore are thus progressing in consonance with advanced political ideals, and if they are on the whole governed as efficiently as British India, and if in such States, in the matter of education, the

encouragement of industrial development and the separation of Executive and Judicial functions there has been remarked an advance on British Indian conditions, what rational objections could be raised against the Indianising the *personnel* and the spirit of the British administration? It will, no doubt, be observed that the Indian States have been helped in their career by the work of the British Government in granting protection from external aggression and internal disorder. But to lay emphasis on this is to forget that no sane political thinker in India demands the severance of the Indo-British connection. Home Rule implies and involves the protection and guidance of the British Empire, and this is the essence of the demand of the Congress and the Muslim League. If then the capacity of Indians to govern Native States be admitted, it cannot for a moment be contended that self-rule is inexpedient in the divisions or districts many of which are much smaller in extent and population than many Native States.

The *Englishman* has recently stated that a country which is unable to stand by itself in all things, to finance itself, or to defend itself is not ready to govern itself. This argument needs only to be mentioned to stand self-condemned when we remember the case of Canada and Australia. As for financial independence, many of the countries like Japan and Russia have been and are developed with foreign capital, and that has never been urged as a proof of the unfitness of the countries referred to to govern themselves. Some, if not all, of the Anglo-Indian critics lay stress on the point that there is so much British capital and British trade organisation in this country that the administration must be predominantly British and cannot be left in Indian hands.

Two answers can be furnished to this contention. Firstly, that no one thinks of depriving the Englishman settled in India, the capitalist or the merchant, of the importance due to him by virtue of his trade and other interests. What is sought to be guarded against is solely the exaggeration of his importance. In 1916 the British investments in Canada and Newfoundland amounted to over 570 million pounds. In Australasia they amounted to 443 millions, in South Africa to 372 millions. In India the amount was about 389 million pounds. If the investment of British capital in the Colonies did not deter the Imperial Government from granting self-rule to them, why should India alone stand on a separate footing? We may, in this connection, refer in passing to the investment of over 340 million pounds in the Argentine Republic, in the administration of which country the British trader and the merchant have absolutely no voice, and the investment in unsettled countries like Chili. Another favourite argument that has been urged is that whereas in England centuries were taken in perfecting and evolving the system of Government, the reformers in India are desirous of inaugurating the new system all at once. The examples of Serbia, of Japan and of the Philippinos —the last of whom started without any hereditary aptitude and are nevertheless satisfactorily exercising the rights of Self-Government after an apprenticeship of less than ten years—are a refutation of this argument and indicate the conclusion that every country need not take centuries or generations to learn statecraft, but may be safely left to manage their own affairs as soon as they can get a chance to do so.

One of the main reasons which have prompted the demand in question is the fact that whilst the

British Government, conducted as it has been, has been successful in preventing foreign aggression and establishing peace and order in the country and whilst the collection and expenditure of revenue have been undoubtedly honest, yet, in educational advancement, in power of self-defence, in the organisation of trade and cognate matters, the country has made very little progress indeed. At the risk of repetition it may be stated that the Philippinos have been rendered more literate in about 30 years than India in 150 years. Whilst we admit the benefits that have resulted from the bureaucracy, we feel that in the matter of industrial advancement and general intellectual progress, a self-governing India would have made more headway than an India under the present system.

To those who urge—and there are some who still persist in the allegation—that Indian character has not developed to the extent of manifesting its fitness for self-rule, we would only say that in every country the progress has been slow from corruption and self-seeking to proper democratic ideals, and one need not go further for instances than the pages of Redlich and Hirst's book on *Local Government in England*, containing extracts from the reports of the Parliamentary Commission, dated 1835, regarding the municipalities of that period. After the recent enquiries relating to the Civil Service in England, the assumption that Indians are unfit for Self-Government because there occasionally come to light cases of nepotism, municipal or other jobbery, embezzlement or corruption, is wrong-headed and unsubstantial. Wherever local Self-Government has been given a fair chance in India and entrusted with real responsibility, it has been visited with success, and the Bengal Government recently observed that

the experiment of giving the municipalities a free hand in the preparation of their Budget has on the whole justified itself, while at the same time the Government noticed " in the affairs of municipalities a growing sense of capacity and responsibility in the matter of Self-Government encouraging the Government to believe that further confidence in their powers of financial administration would not be misplaced ". Exactly the same arguments as are now put forward about stages of progress and so forth were adduced in 1901 in the Philippine Commission Report. "Educated people themselves," said that Report, " though full of phrases concerning liberty, have but a faint conception of what real civil liberty is ". " This is the difficulty we now encounter in the organisation of the municipality. The President fails to observe the limitations upon his powers and the people are too submissive to press them." By 1909 the Governor was able to congratulate the municipalities on the sacrifices they had made and on the successful administration by them of their affairs.

One of the most formidable objections raised against the grant of Home Rule is the comparative illiteracy of the vast majority of the people of this country. The percentage of the children of school age who were at school is less than 20, and therefore India has to wait a considerable while and has first to educate itself before demanding Parliamentary institutions. We do not concede that illiteracy in the sense of being unable to read and write is necessarily synonymous with ignorance, and we contend that the average Indian peasant is often a really cultured individual, though not in the sense of being able to read and write, and in any case, owing to his training, quite shrewd and able to manage and take care of his own affairs. But it must not be forgotten

that when representative Government was established in Japan 50 years ago it was only the Samurais, who are in many respects analagous to the Brahmana classes, that were literate. Amongst the rest of the population education was not widespread. In 1873 it was computed that in Japan only 28 per cent. of the children of the school age was in schools. Within 30 years the percentage had risen to 90. In all countries where representative institutions have been established they were worked in the first stages by the more educated or the higher classes; and we contend that it would be enough for the purpose of granting Indian Home Rule if a sufficient number of capable men could be had to represent all the communities in the various Councils. Literacy was not the mark of English Society even in the later ages of its Parliamentary history. Lord Durham's report as to Canada shows that there a great proportion of the teachers could neither read nor write in 1835, and in his words: "It is impossible to exaggerate the want of education amongst the inhabitants. No means of instruction have been provided for them and they are universally destitute of the qualifications for reading and writing." Nevertheless on that country, Canada, were conferred representative institutions enabling it very shortly to wipe out the reproach of ignorance. It must also not be forgotten that in England as late as the sixties of the last century the extension of political privileges did not follow, but was followed by the growth of education. It is a matter for great thankfulness that the recent educational policy of the country has been on the whole beneficent and that Mr. H. L. Fisher was able to say on the 1st November in the House of Commons that "the extension of primary education was closely connected with the political

and administrative questions which would be studied this winter by Mr. Montagu and the Indian Government".

It is next asserted that this country would fall a prey to some powerful neighbour if the British withdrew. We must insist with all the emphasis at our command that what is demanded is not independence but Home Rule, the very phrase implying that we desire autonomy in our own local affairs. Over and above this argument we would point out that it is quite easy for the Government, as Sir S.P. Sinha pointed out in his Presidential Address to the Indian National Congress at Bombay, to help India to be strong to the point of being able to resist foreign aggression and internal troubles. Sectarian and caste fights are also instanced as the possibilities in the wake of the grant of Self-Government. This danger has always been exaggerated. But those who point them out forget that India has not been particularly a land of disorder, at all events not more so than many of the European countries which have their labour and capital riots and their class disputes. The prevalence of caste is also one of the arguments; but the strifes between the Indian castes are not and have never been more bitter than the Negro troubles in America and the bitter disputes between the French and the English in Canada when representative institutions were granted to that country.

So long as the communities in a Province are not subjected to the responsibilities of Government, they have always had quarrels amongst each other. The observations of a traveller in 1759 through the North American Colonies would throw a light on many of the arguments now adduced in the case of India. "Fire and water are not more heterogeneous," says Burnaby,

"than the different Colonies of North America. Nothing can exceed the jealousy and emulation which they possess in regard to each other. The inhabitants of Pennsylvania and New York have an inexhaustible source of animosity in their jealousy for the trade of the Jerseys. The West Indies are a common subject of emulation to them all. In short, such is the difference of character, of manners, of religion, of interest, of the different colours that I think that, if I am not wholly ignorant of the human mind, were they left to themselves, there would soon be a Civil War from one end of the Continent to the other, while the Indians and Negroes would with better reason impatiently watch the opportunity of exterminating them altogether." Lecky says: "Great bodies of Dutch, Germans, French, Swedes, Scotch and Irish scattered among the descendants of the English contributed to the heterogeneous character of the Colonies, and they comprised so many varieties of Government, religious belief, commercial interest and social type that their union appeared to many incredible." (*Vide* Vol. IV, *England in the 18th Century*, page 12.)

The last and not the least reiterated statement of the opponents of Home Rule is the incapacity of the educated men to represent the masses. We shall not give the obvious reply that these educated few are after all more of the people than any foreigner can hope to be. It is also permitted to observe that the so-called educated minority are the products of the uneducated majority. They come from the same homes where dwell the peasants and the artisans, they speak the same language, follow the dictates of the same religion and observe the same customs, and they have an inside knowledge of the conditions which no foreigner can ever obtain or

assimilate. The knowledge of the Civil Servant is largely confined to the criminal classes and those who surround him for favours or honours and it must not be forgotten that every measure for the amelioration of the peasant and his lot has been warmly advocated and insisted upon by the educated minority against whom so much is said by their critics. Is it not also a fact in the language of Sir Henry Maine: "All that has made England famous and all that has made England wealthy has been the work of minorities sometimes very small ones"?

The argument about the Vakil Raj, or the danger of lawyers dominating the situation, is a very fallacious one. The situation will continue so long as the right to carry arms and to serve in the higher ranks of the army is not granted to all classes in this country, and industrial and other careers are not freely opened to the natives of the soil after the grant of fiscal autonomy. The lawyer is what he is because there is no career open to him outside the ranks of the Governmental hierarchy. Moreover, if in the British constitution the Army and Navy are subordinated, and legitimately so, to the civilian element, why should in India alone the soldiers be regarded as necessarily better statesmen than members of the learned professions? A final assertion is made that National Self-Government depends not on the handful of public men needed to supply Cabinets and Parliaments, but on the electorate, on the fitness of a sufficient proportion of the people themselves to choose rulers able to rule. Here again we shall refer to the *Statesman's Year Book for* 1916 regarding the Philippine Islands, which shows that before the passing of the New Law granting voting rights to about eight hundred thousand men, only two hundred

thousand was the total strength of the Electorate; that is, out of a population of nine millions, there were only two hundred thousand voters. If to a country where only 4 per cent. of the men were thought fit to exercise the right of voting Home Rule was conceded, can it be contended that a similar experiment would be hazardous or impracticable in India where it must be conceded there are indubitably more than 4·4 per cent. of the adult male population who are able to choose their rulers? It will also not be forgotten that England, Canada and France did not start in their career of Self-Rule with very large Electorates.

India is often stated to be a mere geographical expression, but even at the present day Canada, Transvaal and the United States are not homogeneous as regards race, religion or language, and it must be remembered in this discussion that, broadly speaking, socially and spiritually, India is more united than most other countries in the world. The last argument we shall notice is that of the religious animosities alleged to be existing between the Hindus and the Muhammadans. The Congress-League scheme —the outcome of their unification through their great political bodies, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League—deprives the argument of much of its force; but even historically considered, it will not be forgotten that apart from isolated frenzies of religious intolerance such as have happened in the case of Aurangazeb, that the Hindu Governors and Viceroys were the greatest and most loyal supporters of the Mughal Empire; and, in the language of Sir William Bentinck, speaking of Muhammadans, "they settle in the countries which they conquer, they intermix with the natives, they admit them

to all privileges, the interests and sympathies of the conquerors and the conquered become identical". With a due sense of responsibility we assert that the troubles between the great communities in recent years has been due to a mistaken policy pursued by a few administrators of openly or covertly sympathising with the one community at the expense of the other. In any case isolated riots and religious disturbances such as occur in this country have always happened in the world. In advanced England, in 1909, fifty Liverpool Schools were closed owing to fights between Protestant and Catholic children aided by their mothers. In September, 1910, attacks were made on the Jews in South Wales which were described by Reuter as a guerilla warfare between the police and the infantry. It will not be forgotten that even in the recent Arrah riots numerous cases of help rendered by Hindus to Muslims and *vice versa* have come to light; there is no radical racial bitterness here such as exists in countries inhabited by Jews or Negroes. But these are hardly any reasons for withholding the right of directing their own affairs to any country. In fine, we assert that not one single thing can be urged to show that India cannot govern herself, "reasonably well at first, excellently well later, if only given the chance," to quote a sincere friend of India, the Rev. Dr. Sunderland of America.

There are those who have not hesitated to say that India has not taken an adequate share in the defence of the Empire in this War and that, therefore, she must wait for political rights. It will be seen that until the Self-Governing Colonies of England obtained their political enfranchisement, the Mother country had to do most things for them. Thereafter, they began to make sacrifices

for the Empire. We shall not recount the services rendered by this country during the War, as that work has been most generously acknowledged by English statesmen and by Sir William Meyer. We shall not point out that if England wanted more men from India for the War, she could have had them by offering suitable prospects and suitable pay as in other parts of the Empire. We shall not refer to the fact that the classes who had been hitherto utilised for recruitment for the Indian Army are of the professional military class; we urge that if adequate enlistment is wanted from the ranks of others, careers suited to their ambitions ought to have been afforded to them. We notice that out of a total of 330,000 men that enlisted in Canada up to the end of June, 1916, French Canada furnished less than 5 per cent.; but has that been ever adduced as an argument against the French Canadians?

In this connection it will be noted that the present system of enlistment has itself created an artificial distinction between races. The Maharattas are not now enlisted in the Army though they are a fighting race and though they are intellectually equal to any other Indian community. The Journal of the *United Service Institution of India*, July, 1897, admits that the Southern and Eastern races of India have lost their martial instincts, as security to life and property has rendered reliance on their own arms unnecessary.

One of the main objects the Congress-League scheme has in view is the bringing into existence of India's fiscal autonomy, the right of revising Indian tariff and customs duties. This is a matter wherein conflicts are apt to arise between English vested interests and Indian. The possession of this power will not involve disregard of

British and Imperial interests but it must not be forgotten that India is to-day not a self-reliant and self-sufficient commercial entity and this is due, in the opinion of many progressive thinkers, to the pursuit of a commercial and fiscal policy dictated from without and not evolved with sole regard to the country's own interests. · We do not desire to enter into any controversies regarding free trade and protective tariffs, but we cannot forget that an eminent Free trader, Professor Thorold Rogers, considered that the English themselves had no industrial aptitude originally. At one time England was an agricultural State exporting wool, cotton, etc., and importing manufactured goods, and her international commerce was in the hands of foreigners. The Easterlings bought wool in England and sold Flemish cloths to the English. The English controlled the supply of raw wool but did neither weave it nor even carry it across from England to Flanders.

For every Sovereign the mediæval Englishman made by growing wool, the Easterling and the Fleming divided seven between them for weaving and carrying it. In Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce, Early and Middle Age*. The Gascons brought their wines into the English market and the Italians traded in the island, but England herself neither manufactured nor traded abroad. To many thinkers in India the answer which history gives to the question, what transferred the Cinderella of Nations into the most powerful Empire in the world, is the fostering protection of productive power. We feel that Lancashire owes her cotton industry not only to sacrifices made by Great Britain but to her protective tariffs. In the 17th century a cloth called fustian was made in Manchester and enthusiasts predicted that if cheap Indian calicos

were excluded from England in time this cotton cloth would be a rival to the Indian fabric. In spite of the opposition of the East India merchants the importation of Indian printed calicos was forbidden in 1700. (11 William III, Chap. 10.)

In 1720 the use of printed cotton cloth was prohibited (7 George I, Ch. 7), and we find that when the Lancashire cotton industry outgrew the home demand, the exportation of cotton goods was fostered by bounties. (21 George III, Ch. 40.) We do not assert that similar measures will be or ought necessarily to be devised in India, but we feel that, in the case of nascent industries and commerce, State guidance and State protection with a sole view to Indian interests would be of the greatest possible utility in any case in competition with countries outside the Empire. We further feel that in the matter of Indian finance it has been demonstrated that Indian interests have been subordinated to others. Council drafts have been sold on occasions when the London balance did not stand in need of replenishment, a system which made money dearest just at the busiest season. The withdrawal of money from India has not been confined to the amount required for Home charges. The India Office has continued to sell rupees at such rates that in one year it realised nearly 14 million sterling in excess of the Indian Budget requirements. The erroneous policy of withdrawing moneys from India to a greater extent than was required for Home charges has been persisted in. The cash balances of the Government of India and the amount of taxation had no relation to each other. The handling of the Treasury balances has emphasised the necessity for the financial autonomy of India. Indian financial experts have always pleaded that if India is to

advance economically, she must advance fiscally. So long as the Government of India keep in London more money than is necessary to meet the absolute requisite charges, so long are they diverting the moneys of India to the detriment of Indians, and the mistakes made by the Government of India in 1912 and 1913 ought to be made impossible. Any accumulations in the hands of the Government ought to be at the disposal of the people. It is now recognised by most economists in India that in the treatment of currency and financial questions Indian interests are always in danger of being subordinated to alien claims unless and until India's fiscal autonomy is assured.

In respect of industrial advancement too it has been felt that the value of cottage industries in this country has become discredited and cannot be restored unless India is mistress in her own house. We feel that the modern phase of industrialism in the West is tending to destroy the very roots of culture and originality and is thus defeating its own end. There thus arises the necessity for an independent economic evolution of India following the tradition of the country. The western industrial world itself is in a stage of transition and in the language of Professor Radhakumand Mukerji, a well-known and respected economic expert, a change in the western industrial organisation is inevitable. Beneath the rush and the roar of industrialism new ideals are slowly taking shape. The problem before India is this: How should India modify her economic institutions so as to withstand the economic disintegration that is going on in the country? Should India copy the western economic institutions and repeat the social evils of the West? These and allied questions can be

adequately solved only if the village economic and social life is restored on a co-operative basis. With regard to the misapplication of the cash balance of the Government of India, no adequate defence has yet been attempted. No official anywhere in the world has ever held such cash balances as 18 million pounds, and the Secretary of State for India, in the language of Mr. Webb, in accumulating a colossal balance of this character for most of which he has no legitimate need, has exposed himself to mismanagement and injustice to India. It is also felt that the whole of the Indian economic system will collapse with the shock and collision of alien tendencies unless the State with a sole view to Indian interests takes up the economic development of the people and refrains from imitating the excessive centralisation of industry into big towns and its control by a few capitalists. Though this argument may seem to be idealistic, yet it is felt that true economic reconstruction will not be possible in India without internal autonomy.

It has been argued that under the present system the people of India have been over-taxed to yield cash surpluses for transfer to London and the system has also exposed the country to the risk of monetary dislocation by transferring the whole of its gold standard reserve to London. The sudden decision in 1894 to sell Council drafts for what they would fetch, and the consequent collapse of the rupee to £0-1-1, the abandonment in 1901 of the effort to put sovereigns into circulation, the heavy coinage of rupees to the extent of 62 crores in 1905-08, the diversion in 1907 of a portion of the gold standard reserve to railway construction, the failure of the Government in 1907 to release gold for home remittance and the decline of the rupee to £0-1-3 11/16, are instances

of an illogical policy pursued with reference to India's fiscal system.

Even such a cautious writer as Mr. Keynes has to admit in his *Indian Currency and Finance*, p. 184, that the proper employment of the Indian cash balances is one in regard to which the Government have pursued no consistent policy.

Thorough education and systematic training which lay at the basis of Japanese progress have not only made themselves felt in the Army and Navy of the country but in industry and commerce as well, and in spite of the poverty of the country she has been able under self-governing institutions to put her finance and currency on a strong foundation developing a sound banking system of her own and side by side with the evolution of manufacturing industries to level up her agriculture. Her railways have been nationalised and her general prosperity is in a high level, and though it is very often stated that the Japanese peoples are different in their mental organisation from the Indians, it is widely felt that not a little of the progress they have made is due to the wise resolution of the State in its attitude toward education. We feel that until education is considered as it ought to be one of the most important of national concerns and developed under indigenous control, this country will not be able to shake off many of the evils confronting it. It was with a view, we take it, to these considerations that the Government of India themselves formulated in 1909 their policy of provincial autonomy, which was sought to be unfairly interpreted in England, but on which the Rt. Hon. E. S. Montagu, speaking at Cambridge, put what to us in India always seemed a proper interpretation.

It is unnecessary to trace the progress of recent Indian demands which have been made in

Congress since 1911, but it would be noticed that in 1916 the Indian National Congress at Lucknow prayed, firstly, that there should be a proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of British policy to confer Self-Government on India at an early date; secondly, the Congress demanded that a definite step towards Self-Government should be taken by the introduction of the Congress League scheme of reforms, and thirdly, it prayed that in the reconstruction of the Empire, India should be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the Self-Governing Dominions. The interpretation in India of the announcement made by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons on the 20th August is that it was sought thereby to meet the first demand. But it is widely felt that announcement is not adequate and that it is uncertain and indefinite and not the less indefinite in that it reserves solely to the Governments in England and in India the right of dictation as to the pace and the quantum of reforms. Recent tendencies in the Colonies and in England have rendered it abundantly clear that the Dominions and the Colonies are insisting on the possession of a voice in the settlement of all Imperial problems and it is not an unnatural fear on the part of India that in such re-organisation of the Empire she would have an inadequate place unless she is lifted, by the grant of Self-Government, in the management of her internal affairs, to the position of absolute equality with the Colonies. Her representation in any Imperial Council can never be properly secured by mere Government nominations, as in the case of the selection of individuals, however eminent, to the Imperial Conference. The point of view of British domination will be emphasised, and it is, therefore, the prayer of the

progressive party in India that representatives to such Imperial Conferences and Councils should be elected by the elected members of the Indian Legislature.

What are the main features of the Congress-League scheme? The case of its supporters is that by it the Government is made responsible, though only partially, to the people. At present, the Legislature has no control over the Government either in the Provinces or at Delhi and Simla. Generally speaking, the joint scheme proposes that in internal affairs the Governor-General in Council and the Legislative Council should be supreme subject to certain restrictions connected with military affairs and foreign and political relations. We contend that sufficient reservations and safeguards have been provided in the scheme making it perfectly compatible with British suzerainty; and the powers of which the Secretary of State is sought to be deprived are those solely of internal administration wherein the exercise of jurisdiction by him in the past has not been beneficial to this country, whether in cases like the imposition of the cotton duties or in cases like the starting of Agricultural Banks. The scheme reserves to the Secretary of State the same position as that occupied by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in relation to those localities. We contend that the abolition of the Secretary of State's Council follows as a necessary outcome of these reforms. The abolition of the India Council would necessarily succeed the allocation of powers under the scheme and in addition to the reasons which have already been given with regard to the constitutional position of that Council, in dealing with the Civil Services, it is also apparent that when the functions of a Government are vested really in the Governor-

General and his Executive and Legislative Councils, there is no place for the Secretary of State's Council. It is on account of fact that all the Indian members of the Council disappear with the Council itself, that the joint scheme has proposed that an Indian Under Secretary should be enabled to supply his experience of the country to the Secretary of State and give him what Lord Morley so aptly described as "an Indian angle of vision".

The scheme vests the power of making all appointments in the Imperial Civil Service in the Government of India as it is constituted. It carefully preserves all existing interests.

Coming next to the Government of India, the joint scheme asks that one-half of the members of the Executive should be Indians elected by the elected members of the Legislative Councils, and that officers of the Indian Civil Service should not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Council.

In addition to the arguments already adduced relating to place of the permanent officialdom in the governance of the country, it is felt that the membership of the Executive Councils involves a broad outlook and the larger gifts of statesmanship rather than administrative experience or knowledge of technical details. Insistence is placed upon a minimum of Indians in the Governor-General's Executive Council on the ground that the Indian members should not be in a perpetual minority and that they should, if they combine together and further get the support of the Viceroy or Governor, be able to follow out the policy which they put forward as the people's representatives. The scheme does not ask for full responsible Government, but it is felt that the election of the Indian members by the Legislative Councils will ensure the

attainment of a sense of responsibility in addition to efficiency.

The pivotal point of the scheme is the Legislative Council, and the increasing of its functions and its strength and the widening of the franchise and the emphasis laid upon the elective majority are features which are essential to its success as an experiment on democratic lines. It will be noticed that all military and political matters are practically beyond its scope and military expenditure outside its activity. It is urged that this scheme makes for what is termed a "dead-lock" between the Government and the Legislature. Many of the opponents of this particular measure who speak of a possible dead-lock forget that it is not often that all the non-officials with their divergent interests would vote together; but if they vote together the existence of such a majority will give rise to an irresistible presumption that the people wish the particular measure to be carried. And, after all, when it is remembered that the Legislative Councils are confining their activities to matters of internal administration, the dangers ahead arising out of a resolution passed by the Legislature to which the Executive cannot or will not give its assent are more apparent than real.

It may be noted that in the majority of the States comprising the United States, the Governor has a veto upon legislation which may, however, be over-ridden by the two Houses —in some States by a simple majority and in others by 3/5 or 2/3 majority. The Governor, though chosen by the direct vote of the people, keeps office for a term varying from one to four years. Although these regulations provide all the possibilities sufficient to produce a dead-lock, yet in practice very few dead-locks have arisen and

we venture to say that it may be safely assumed that having regard to the past experience of the Supreme and Provincial Councils, the members of the Legislative Councils may be trusted to have an adequate sense of responsibility. In any case there is no reason for apprehending that Government will have to proceed by a series of vetoes.

Take next the case which has been often put of the imperfections of a scheme which, giving the power of the purse to the elected representatives and providing that all financial proposals should be embodied in bills to be submitted to the vote of the Imperial Legislative Council, yet makes the Executive irremovable. It has been predicted that this will make the administration impossible; but even here, the experience of other countries is of great utility, and may be resorted to. In most of the continental countries, ministerial estimates are submitted to a preliminary examination by a Committee selected and specially suited for the work, and this body in effect very often recasts the original proposals. In the United States, the initiative is placed in the hands of distinct Committees and financial measures in fact come from the Legislature itself, though they are, in the language of Professor Bastable, "partly conditioned by the requirements of public departments". In England alone is the other extreme reached. The estimates and the proposed annual taxes are submitted before the whole House sitting as a Committee and investigated without previous enquiry. The English constitution makes ministerial responsibility tremendously great, as the measures that make up the Budget are the work of the Cabinet. The Committee system which is in force in the continental countries really acts as a screen for the preparers of the financial proposals and divides responsibility.

Certain heads of expenditure, especially the interest on debts and the salaries of judicial officers, are removed in the western countries from the field of dispute and the general revenue system is not annually changed and is fixed by permanent legislation. This is the theory which obtains in the case of the English consolidated fund which absorbs by far the largest part of the revenue by virtue of permanent Acts, and out of which a third of the annual expenditure is drawn. All absolutely needful expenditure is placed in a consolidated form and stable taxes are separated from movable ones. The German military expenditure before the War was voted for a period of seven years and thus removed from annual debate. The permanent settlement of some sections of income and expenditure does not really infringe the so-called principle of the unity of the Budget. In the case of England, the annual financial statement combines all the heads of expenses and receipts as well as the movement of the National debt. The consolidated fund charges are definitely known and the estimates supply information as to the main expenditure. As pointed out by most economic writers, convention and usage have been more successful in keeping up a high standard of efficiency in this matter than definite constitutional enactments. There are not wanting expedients such as those indicated above and others which may be devised as occasion arises for preventing any stoppage of the administrative machinery. Devices such as supplementary estimates, appropriation acts and the consolidated fund can undoubtedly be thought of for combating the evils that may arise.

It will be noticed that throughout the scheme, both in regard to Imperial and local Councils, the system of representation is territorial and not

based on distinctions of class with the exception of Muhammadans and the provision made for certain interests. The scheme, however, has carefully provided that no clause, bill or any clause thereof nor a resolution should be proceeded with if three-fourths of the members of any community affected by it oppose the same. This will safeguard the rights of all communities who have been nervous that their particular interests may be jeopardised or endangered by a dominant majority. In the Province of Madras there has recently arisen a demand, namely, for what is called communal representation. Certain communities, rightly or wrongly, have been feeling that one class has acquired an undue preponderance of political power. Whilst it does not share in this view nor feel that theoretically communal representation is beneficial or useful in the long run, yet in deference to the strongly expressed opinion of a large class of persons, the Home Rule League would have no objection to arrangements being made, for instance, in the Madras Presidency, to secure that communities other than the Brahmanas should also obtain an adequate representation in the Councils, care being taken, however, that in the system of elections, the basis of territorial representation is preserved intact. Thus, for instance, in a mixed electorate composed of those resident in a district possessed of certain property and other qualifications, it may be provided that not more than a certain percentage should belong to any specified community. This system would contain in itself the antidote to communal differences. While satisfying the demands of those who now feel that they are not getting their due share of political power, this scheme will automatically educate the inhabitants of each locality into forgetting these communal differentiations. Any

other system based on communal electorates will, instead of tending to obliterate, serve to intensify the compartmental feeling.

Proposals regarding the elections by the Councils of their own Presidents, the power of the Council to make rules for itself and the rights as to private bills have been inserted in the scheme to liberalise the present system and are absolutely essential for its proper working. The Congress-League scheme does not deal with the distribution of Provincial areas; but the Home Rule League has, from its inception, encouraged the distribution of Provinces on a linguistic basis and has, in fact, so far as its own activities are concerned, acted on the basis of this principle. The idea of the building up of various autonomous Provinces culminating in a self-governing Indian Government would, in the opinion of a large number of men, demand that this reform be effected. The scheme itself provides that the country should be organised into various self-governing Provinces federated into one Central Government, and a common language is the strongest bond of union which can produce a homogeneous political life in the present circumstances. The principle itself has been recognised by the Government of India and was partly adopted in the amendment of the Partition of Bengal and the constitution of the new Province of Behar. Similar questions will arise with reference to the Uriyas and the Sindhis, and it will not be an impracticable matter to provide for the division of Indian Provinces on the language basis.

Coming to the question of Provincial Governments, the proposals of the scheme are that every Province should be under a Governor in Council, one-half of the Executive Council being elected by the elected members of the Provincial

Legislative Council; and it is suggested that members of the Indian Civil Service or the permanent services should not be ordinarily appointed to the Governorship or to the membership of the Council. Provincial autonomy is further provided for and the present system with regard to financial adjustments will also disappear in consequence, and more or less complete financial decentralisation will be started subject to such revisions as may be necessitated at specified intervals. We have appended hereunto a memorandum working out the details of Provincial Finance under the Scheme of Provincial autonomy proposed in the Congress League scheme by a member of the League. As a part of the general scheme of Provincial autonomy, Provincial Legislative Councils are sought to be extended so that they may be really representative bodies of which as in the case of the Imperial Legislative Council one-fifth of the members will be nominated and will, in all probability, be officials or trusted non-officials. It is well recognised that the present number of members does not adequately represent the people of the various Provinces, and in the Provincial as in the Imperial Council care is taken that the election should be on as broad a franchise as possible. The Congress-League scheme, as stated in the address itself, does not deal with the question of local Self-Government, but a separate memorandum has been annexed hereto with reference to that subject. But it may be stated here that it is felt on all hands that the revival of the old system of Village Panchayats is recognised as a condition *sine qua non* to progress in this direction. Such Village Panchayats and the Taluq, District and Municipal Boards which are the next step ought to be wholly elected bodies with elected Chairmen and

with adequate powers of financial control and there should be vested in them real financial responsibility.

The scheme, after insisting on the placing of India on an equality with the other parts of the Empire and on the throwing open to Indians of Commissions in the Army and the encouragement of volunteering, insists on the separation of Executive and Judicial functions as a condition precedent to the satisfactory administration of justice and the attainment of really independent judicial machinery. One matter has, however, to be borne in mind in the consideration of these proposals, namely, that they are all intended the one to be linked with the other. For instance, the grant of Provincial autonomy in the sense that Provincial Government are free to regulate their own affairs without at the same time liberalising their administration as provided for, will be a disastrous step, as will take away the little control that the Government of India has over the Provincial Government which may, in the absence of such control, lose all sense of responsibility. So long as the Local Governments are not made responsible to the people, the latter ought not to be left without appellate authority in the case of capricious or unjustified acts.

We feel thankful for the declaration made by Your Excellency the Viceroy promising an increasing association of Indians in the Public Services of the country. The Home Rule League feels that unless the majority Report of the Public Services Commission is substantially modified, and the Services are Indianised, and the artificial barriers removed from the path of the Indians in this matter, the administration of the country will for a long time to come be inefficient and unpopular, and will not be in touch with the popular

will or popular demands. Speaking of the reforms associated with his name, Lord Minto claimed that they would really and effectively associate the people of India with the Government in the work not only of occasional legislation but of actual everyday administration. That scheme, it is felt, has failed to vindicate the claim made for it and we feel that it is desirable, in the language of Mr. Asquith, to give the people of India the feeling that the Legislative Councils and other institutions of the country are not mere automata. Proposals have been placed before the country to the effect that as a tentative measure certain subjects alone should be handed over to the Legislative Councils, and that certain departments of Government may alone be under the control of the Legislature. If this extraordinary idea is to be brought into force, the Legislative Council would be vested with control over persons in the Executive Council who ought to be removable at the pleasure or on the vote of the Legislative Council, and in respect of whose actions the votes of their colleagues in the Executive Council ought to have no effect.

Another scheme has also been adumbrated of remodelling the Legislative Councils so that in certain fields of provincial administration they should sit in their present capacity as merely Advisory Councils and that in certain other fields they should sit as responsible legislators as in the Self-Governing Colonies. There would then arise in each Province a Provincial Ministry entrusted with special powers and revenues. If this Ministry lost the confidence of the Council, it has been suggested that they should resign or ask the Government to dissolve the Council. We feel absolutely sure that this system will not satisfy the aspirations of the country and will not

change the essential character of the Legislature nor increase its capacity for usefulness. There will be a further difficulty that all over the country there will be administrative officials each one of whom will exercise control over various functions, some of which will be under the control of legislative bodies under the new scheme and some of which will not be; this will produce a series of real dead-locks and a system of dual control and the necessary logical result would be to provide for separate sets of officials, one to be under Legislative Councils in their new capacity and one under the Executive Government in its old capacity. The multiplication of officials and the consequent increase in expenditure will, it is believed, be hardly compensated by any real or effective political training that may thus be given to the people.

These are the suggestions and arguments which we have ventured to put forward in support of our demands and in rebuttal of the arguments adduced against us. India will venture to say that she has proved her sense of Imperial responsibility in the present War. She wants, nay intensely desires, to remain a part of the Empire but an equal partner, with other Self-Governing Dominions with the liberty of self-expression, self-realisation and self-development. Our League desires to press through you on the great British democracy the position that free and constitutional forms of government are the sole means by which growth and progress can be ensured to the masses of the population. Their participation in the opportunities and responsibilities of governance will be their greatest education, and England can hardly forget that whenever the principles of liberty have been vindicated, the history of the Empire has demonstrated that freedom is its cement.

Note.—The original copy of the Memorandum presented to H. E. the Viceroy and the Rt. Hon. Mr. E. S. Montagu contained, at this point, a statement by Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Editor, the *Swadeshamitran*, on Provincial Finance under the Congress-League Scheme. It is now published in a separate book, which also contains his statements on other aspects of that scheme. Then followed Mr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar's scheme of Imperial Finance, which has long been available to the public as a Home Rule Pamphlet.

Local Self-Government

To the scheme of reforms above mentioned a Minority Report was added by the present President and one of the General Secretaries of the Home Rule League on the question of Local Self-Government. We consider that Self-Government should be based on a recognition of the right of the vast masses of the population—who cannot at present take part in the election of members of Provincial Legislative Councils—to have a voice in the management of their own affairs. We, therefore, submit the following outline of elected bodies, utilising the present system with additions, and making it wholly elective, giving details for the Madras Presidency as a sample of the whole.

(The following, taken from the Census of 1911, Madras Presidency, shows the number of centres to be dealt with. It will be observed that there are differences of 2 and of 4 in the different tables given in the Census, but these are irrelevant.)

Total number of towns	280 or 278
Villages ...	53,832
Total	54,112 or 54,110

(But given in Census total as 54,114)

Class	Number	Population	Munici-pality	
I. Over 100,000	3	776,302	3	Madras M. & Cantonment. Madura M. Trichinopoly M. & Cantonment.
II. 50,000 to 100,000	8	487,274	8	Calicut M. & C.
III. 20,000 to 50,000	38 or 40	1,264,259	32	Bellary M. & C. Cannanore M. & C.
IV. 10,000 to 20,000	105	1,480,071	13	Poonamallee & S. Thomas Mount C.
V. 5000 to 10,000	113 towns 295 villiges	861,221 1,819,501	4	Pallaveram & Wellington C.
VI. 2000 to 5000	11 towns 3718 villages	50,349 10,671,268	1	Kodaikanal, pop. 2906.
VII. 1000 to 2000	7947	11,087,248		
VIII. 500 to 1000	10,131	7,285.082		
IX. Under 500	31,741	5,530,787		

The Panchayat system is dealt with in full in the appended Transaction of a Madras Debating Society, which utilises Parliamentary forms. The Transaction contains also the speech of Mr. T. Rangachariar, now a member of the Madras Legislative Council, into which he vainly sought to move for permission to ask leave to introduce

it as a Bill. Pp. IX to XXXVII contain the provisions: Chapter I, clause 5, makes the Panchayat wholly elective, and given adult resident household suffrage, without distinction of sex, women being recognised in India as very competent business managers. The powers and duties of the Panchayat are fully set out in detail in the measure.

In towns with between 10,000 and 5000 Municipalities should be established as in the five towns already possessing them, and the electorate should consist of adult resident owners or occupiers as in the Village Panchayats. In all other towns with Municipalities there should be Ward Panchayats, elected by a similar electorate, with duties assigned to them by the Municipality of the town.

The second stage should be Taluq Boards, the number of Taluqs in Madras was 96 in 1916.

The electorate should consist of the Village Panchayats and those qualified to vote in Firkas (Revenue Circles) at present. Later on, if found necessary, Firka Boards might be introduced between the Village Panchayats and the Taluq Boards. In Madras no Taluq contains less than 3 Firkas, nor more than 13. Most Firkas return one member to the Taluq Board, many return two, and in two cases a Firka returns three; the Madras Government regards the Firka as the "basis of the elective system," Panchayats being as yet not introduced generally. In Anantapur District, to take one instance, there are 4 Taluqs, and the Taluqs contain respectively 6, 7, 8 and 9 Firkas, returning 31 members to the Taluq Board. There are 96 Taluqs in the 26 Districts of the Presidency, including Madras. For the present the functions of Taluq Boards may remain as they are, subject to the withdrawal of those given to the Panchayat.

The District Boards should be elected as follows:

(*a*) Taluq Boards, 96.
(*b*) Each Municipality (outside Madras), 1 member.
(*c*) Registered Zamindars, 96 members.
„ Graduates, 96 „
„ Non-graduate
Professional men, 96 members.

Taluqs	96		520
Municipalities	62	(pop. 2,092,585)	Total —— = 20
(Madras)	3	(„ 518,660)	26
Registered	288		for each Dis-
Minorities	71		trict Board

General Principle: to represent on District Boards all interests in District. There should be representatives of the four great classes, Hindus, Musalmans, Christians, and Submerged. Proportion in each district to be fixed by Provincial Legislative Council. Special Minorities should be represented.

These Local Bodies should be controlled, as in England, under the Local Government Board Act of 1871, and its cognate enactments subsequently passed. An Indian member of the Executive of the Province should exercise the functions of the President of the Local Government Board.

List of Documents Submitted with the Address

I. Memorandum in four parts:
(i) Explanatory of the proposals of the H. R. League.
(ii) Explanatory of Provincial Finance.
(iii) „ Imperial „
(iv) Memorandum on Local Self-Government.

II. The Commonwealth of India Act.

III. " " The Indian Judicature.

IV. Madras Panchayats Act.

V. Compulsory Elementary Education.

VI. Self-Government for India.

VII. District Work.

VIII. Scheme of the Madras Congress Committee.

IX. Congress and Muslim League Scheme.

X. Memorandum of the Nineteen Non-Official Members of the Imperial Legislative Council.

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